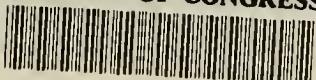


DP 217

.W3

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00013407046





LECTURE
ON
The Present Political Condition
AND
PROSPECTS OF SPAIN:

DELIVERED BEFORE
THE MARYLAND INSTITUTE
FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE MECHANIC ARTS,
BY S. T. WALLIS, Esq.

MARCH 12, 1852.

Published at the Request of the Institute.

BALTIMORE:
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY JOHN MURPHY & CO.

No. 178 MARKET STREET.

1852.

With the compliments of
J. S. T. Wallis
LECTURE

ON

The Present Political Condition

AND

PROSPECTS OF SPAIN:

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE MARYLAND INSTITUTE

FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE MECHANIC ARTS,

By S. T. WALLIS, Esq.

25.10
~~5350~~
MARCH 12, 1852.

Published at the Request of the Institute.



BALTIMORE:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY JOHN MURPHY & CO.

No. 178 MARKET STREET.

1852.

DP 217
W3

08-28785

MARYLAND INSTITUTE, Baltimore, *March 15, 1852.*

To S. TEACKLE WALLIS, Esq.

Sir:—I regret to learn that you cannot comply with the request of the Committee on Lectures to repeat the Lecture delivered by you before the Institute on the evening of the 12th instant.

The gratification afforded by your admirable production, to the intelligent auditory assembled on the occasion, and the disappointment of a very large number of ladies and gentlemen, who, from the crowded state of the Hall, were unable to gain admission, have caused a strong desire to obtain the discourse in print, for perusal and preservation.

In response, therefore, to the general wish, and on behalf of the Managers and Members of the Maryland Institute, I take pleasure in soliciting you to place in the possession of the Committee on Lectures the manuscript for publication.

With high regard,

Your obedient servant,

JOSHUA VANSANT, *President*

Maryland Institute.

ST. PAUL STREET, *March 15, 1852.*

JOSHUA VANSANT, Esq.

President Maryland Institute, &c.

Sir:—I am greatly indebted to the Managers and Members of the Maryland Institute, for the favorable consideration they have done me the honor to express, through you, in your courteous letter of this morning.

As a portion of the historical matter, which my lecture contains, will probably be published hereafter, in a more formal shape, and I hope, a more instructive connexion, I should prefer, on my own account, postponing its appearance, altogether, till that time. I feel, however, that the kindness of my reception, and of your present request leaves me no alternative but that of placing the manuscript at your disposal.

I shall, therefore, very cheerfully hand it to your Committee, and

Am, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

S. T. WALLIS.

Lecture on Spain.

It is not altogether my fault, if the topics to which I shall invite your attention, have but little direct relation to the peculiar objects of the Institution at the request of whose officers I am before you. The narrative—for it is but little more—which I am about to present you, was prepared for a different purpose, and had already answered that purpose, well or ill, when the Managers of the Institute did me the honor to insist that I should make it part of the course in which I had promised to participate. The historical shape which it necessarily assumes, leaves but little room, at the best, for that sort of attraction which is now generally sought in the lecture-room. It is not my object to aim at anything of the kind. I shall be content if you will allow me, as unambitiously as may be, to diffuse a little information upon a subject which few persons take the trouble to investigate, but which has occupied a good deal of my observation and leisure. It may be the means of removing a few, out of many, prejudices which have riped and riped, until it is now well nigh time for them to rot and rot.

Our actual relations with Spain and her magnificent and much coveted dependency, the Island of Cuba, should render a just idea of the political situation and prospects of that ancient kingdom particularly desirable to us at this moment. The eminently attractive point of view too, in which the reigning Monarch has recently presented herself to us—dispensing, with a womanly heart and a free hand, the blessed prerogative of mercy—should incline us to regard, not only with interest, but with a warm and partial interest, the institutions which support

her throne. So far as the higher walks of literature are concerned, we have certainly done our part as a nation, towards illustrating the glorious past of the Peninsula. We have dedicated to it the learning and taste of Ticknor, the graceful inspiration of Longfellow, and the genius and eloquence of Prescott and Irving. But as a general rule, with rare exceptions, it is hardly possible for anything to surpass the grossness of the ignorance which is displayed by our public prints in regard to the present social and political condition of the Spaniards, the nature of their government, and the effect and tendency of their institutions. A large proportion of the graver and more responsible sources of information are tainted with the same vice, and it really seems as if there were a combination between journalists, travellers, and sketch-writers, to justify, in the premises, the outbreak of Walpole against history—"Oh! tell me not of that, for that I know to be a lie!"

I must not, of course, be understood-as pretending to any monopoly of fairness or accuracy in either the facts or the deductions I shall give you. I profess nothing more than to have examined the matter carefully, impartially, and for myself, with advantages not every day enjoyed, and facilities which I did my best, in an humble way, to render usefully available.

If you take up one of the multitudinous school-books of your children—a geography or history, for example—and turn to the title "Spain," there is every probability that you will find it headed, according to the prevalent pictorial fashion, with a wood-cut, representing a *fandango*, or a bull-fight, or a man with a sugar-loaf hat and breeches, who is thrumming on a guitar, under a grated window. I have occasionally seen such books, not long back, with prints of heretics, in long gowns and fools' caps—their hands tied behind them, and a crowd of shaven and ferocious looking monks brandishing crucifixes in their faces! Now, there can be no doubt that the Inquisition did once exist in Spain, and men burned each other—

"—— quite persuaded
That all the Apostles would have done as they did,"—

but it is more than seventy years since the last random blaze of the *autos de fe* was put out! Bull-fighting is unquestionably a popular amusement there still, and to me, I am sorry to confess,

an exceedingly fascinating one, in spite of its cruelty. It is quite true that men do dance in Spain, and make love, and use their guitars and voices for the purpose, especially in Andalusia—where, as elsewhere, love-making is regarded as a charming sport, though dangerous! But bull-fighting, and dancing, and the singing of love-songs are not all of life there, notwithstanding. The national existence means something more than that comes to. Men have cravings there, like other men, for something higher and better than the Barmecide feast of pleasure. In the name then of true knowledge and honest teaching, why should education be thus debased into a scheme for the inculcation and perpetuation of prejudices? Are we to see nations painted only in the colors of their follies or their vices? To make them understand and respect each other—to teach them what is good in their fellows—is the best way of keeping them friends, and preserving the peace of the world. To fill them with false notions of each other—to make them despise each other—is to whip the horses of war. In national, as in social intercourse, it is the trifle, that goads and irritates and nourishes ill-blood. Questions of principle, between nations as between men, are easily understood and easily settled, where neither prejudice nor passion distorts them. All men agree upon them, in the main, and the world's opinion is an arbitrament which nations in the main obey. But it requires an approved Christian to do justice, much less charity, where he despises or feels contempt, and still more, where he is despised or contemned, and can retaliate. Nations, I am afraid, are sorry Christians at best, and cannot, at all events, be relied on for the exercise of the virtues that become them as such, to any greater extent than individual sinners.

It is in this point of view that it becomes every lover of peace and justice to set his face against the barbarous system of poisoning the youthful mind, to which I have alluded. It is for this, that it becomes every man who has had access to the truth to show it forth when he can. It is this system of caricature—originating partly in our inheritance of English prejudice and partly in religious bias—the *odium theologicum*, that worst of hatreds—it is this system of ridicule and injustice—which has utterly destroyed the sympathy we ought to feel for a great, magnanimous and loyal people. It is this which makes us forget the

patriotism and endurance that have carried the Spanish people in honor and triumph, through struggle after struggle, long and bloody, for their national integrity and independence. It is this which makes us continue, in the face of fact and in the light of knowledge, to despise, as the slaves of a despotism, the subjects of a constitutional monarchy—a people in whose hearts and customs is implanted as much of the spirit of proud personal independence and high-toned nationality, as much of genuine manliness, and true chivalry, and scorn of wrong and baseness, as in any people upon either continent!

The Spanish government, I have said, is a Constitutional Monarchy. It is, I confess, as fully entitled to the appellation from the number of the organic laws it has had, as from their nature. The first, the Constitution of 1812, was framed during the absence of Ferdinand VII, in captivity in France, by the many eminent and patriotic men who had been most active in devoting themselves and their fortunes to the maintenance of the national independence against Napoleon. Loyal as well as patriotic, they had taken no advantage of their king's long absence, to weaken his legitimate authority or sap the foundations of his throne. They had done nothing without his declared and apparently sincere approbation, and when at last he was about to return to the sceptre of his ancestors, it was the pride of the good and brave men who had preserved it for him, that they had made him and his descendants secure in its possession, by linking the dignity and honor of the monarch with the happiness and freedom of the people. The defects of the Constitution were no doubt many—such as it was impossible to avoid, in engraving a free representative system upon the habits and traditions of an eminently monarchical and long oppressed country. But its framers kept continually before them the subordination of the crown to the law, and the protection of the rights of all classes, from the encroachments of both lawlessness and power. During the short period of their sway, the first Constitutional Cortes reformed many abuses, ecclesiastical and political, and established much that was wise, liberal, and of hopeful promise.

The first act of the restored king, however, was to avail himself of the enthusiasm produced by his return, to overthrow the Constitution, forswear the oath he had voluntarily taken to

support it, and repudiate and anathematize whatever had been done for freedom in his name. To the faithful servants, who had devoted themselves through blood and fire to their country and to him, but had been guilty of the sin of constitutionalism, dungeons and chains were the mildest testimonials of his gratitude. All that was wise, and eloquent, and liberal, and good, in the land, was sent into exile, poverty and sorrow. Despotism became more despotic than ever, for it was the despotism of a treacherous and unprincipled reaction.

From 1820 to 1823, there was a brief revival of constitutional rule. But those were the days, in Europe, of congresses of kings, and holy alliances—of the balance of power, the right divine, and sacred restorations. We, in this country, had not been favored then with any Hungarian revelations, as to the sense of the word “intervention,” or the meaning of the Washingtonian Policy. In the face of the whole world, therefore, the Duc d’Angoulême, in 1823, marched from the Bidasoa to Cadiz, to crush for Ferdinand what he could not crush for himself—to stifle the struggles of a people who meant, and were able to be, and but for him would have been free. The deed was soon done, and when the exiles of that strife were scattered the wide world over, there is no tradition that a national cock-boat, even, was sent with a greeting to one of them, or that one generous wine-cup was emptied to the hopes of their “down-trodden” land. It was some consolation to them, however, that if they lost the banquets of these days, they were likewise spared the hand-shaking and the speeches!

From 1823, down to the death of Ferdinand VII, in 1833, the picture is all shadow. It is hard to say whether folly or iniquity was the predominant characteristic of that very foolish and wicked man. His only objects in life were power, vengeance, and the gratification of his appetites. His policy had but two departments, force and fraud. His only address was falsehood, and when it was not necessary to him as an instrument, he sported with it as an accomplishment, or enjoyed it as a luxury. He hated constitutions because they trammelled him. He hated reform even when it did him no harm, because the constitutionalists were reformers, and had befriended him, and had shed their blood for him, and he hated them. Having no idea of government, except as the exercise of his own will,

he found the ancient traditions of his kingdom as objectionable as the new lights, and he loved them all the less, because he understood none of them. Religion—though he professed it sturdily, went through its forms ostentatiously, and clung to it, like a bad coward, when death terrified him—he practically valued only as a lever of government. Education and literature he discouraged, because he knew nothing about them, and had an indefinite idea that they were not to be trusted. Men of learning and talent he drove as far away from him as possible, being, to use a phrase of Lord Chesterfield's, “as much afraid of them as a woman is of a gun, which she thinks may go off of itself and do her a mischief.” He had, in fine, no sympathy with the feelings of his people, because he had no heart, and none with their intellectual yearnings, because he had no head. The only good thing he ever did was to die, and he did that, so history records, as slowly and unsatisfactorily as possible, having never learned, in all his vicissitudes, to submit with grace to necessity, and being opposed on principle to gratifying his people, as long as he could in any way avoid it. As a rebel poet said of his grandsire, Charles III, a far better and wiser man,

“*Murió de mandar harto,*”

he died of a surfeit of power! We may pardon power many of its enormities for having ultimately become his executioner!

Upon the death of Ferdinand, the Queen Regent his widow Cristina, would have willingly adhered to the simple despotism which he had taken so much pains to establish, but Don Carlos, the brother of the late king, declared himself at once the legitimate heir to the crown, and Cristina was compelled to make friends, as she best might, for her infant daughter, who had been proclaimed Queen under the title of Isabella the Second. Don Carlos being an ignorant and narrow minded bigot, whose chronology of ideas came down no lower than the fifteenth century, of course rallied around him the most influential and active partisans of the stationary and retrograde schools in government and ecclesiastical policy. Cristina consequently had no alternative, but to throw herself and her daughter into the arms of the liberal party. It was an alliance of interest, not of love, on the Regent's part, and the smiles of heaven were never upon it. Her first step was an attempt to

compromise between despotism and a liberal system, by the promulgation of the *Estatuto Real*, or Royal Statute, a quasi-constitution, which was in reality worse than nothing, for it merely added the attractive semblance of popular representation to the usual conveniences of absolute rule. The liberal party had devoted themselves with unfaltering faith to the throne of Isabella. It was the cause not merely of freedom and the future, but of chivalry—of a royal widow and a helpless girl—and they were ready to die for it, as their fathers died, for God and Isabella the Catholic, on the Vega of Granada. Yet they were too wise not to know the folly of trusting altogether to Bourbon generosity or justice. They had just come home from the banishment into which kingly treachery had twice sent them, and they knew that Cristina was of the House of Naples. The *Estatuto Real*, therefore, could not satisfy them. The Queen Regent, being a Bourbon, was of course deaf to reason and experience, and the result was that in the summer of 1836, she found herself compelled, amid the bayonets of a rebellious soldiery, to sign a decree for the promulgation, once again, of the Constitution of 1812-20. This was but the prelude to the meeting of a Constituent Cortes, or as we would call it, a Constitutional Convention, whose labors were crowned, in June, 1837, by the adoption of yet another fundamental law.

When the constitutional system was overthrown in 1823, the liberal party had been long enough in power to be broken into factions. The principal point of difference was that which divides all popular parties—the question as to where progress should end and conservatism begin. Ten years of persecution and sorrow seemed but to have confirmed the advocates of each set of doctrines in their original convictions, and when the necessities of Queen Cristina recalled them all to the responsibilities of government, it was but a signal for the revival of old disorders. The conservative liberals had become satisfied more than ever, that they could only escape the uncertainties of the past by centralizing the administration, strengthening constitutionally the hands of the executive, and appealing to loyal and conservative traditions. The men of progress, on the other hand, were quite as thoroughly convinced that too many concessions had already been made to the monarchical and central idea, and they believed that they could see in those concessions the true secret of

the downfall of former free institutions. The Regent being a Queen, and as I have said, a Neapolitan, of course followed but her instinct, in supposing that conservative liberalism was a lesser evil, than the same iniquity rampant with the spirit of change. She therefore, without hesitation united her fortunes with those of the *moderados*, between whom and the *progresistas* the breach was made, daily, wider, by the struggle for power.

Party names, like all other words which typify practical opinions, signify much or little, according to their latitudes and the circumstances which surround them. Most things, indeed, owe a great deal to the light in which we see them and the eyes we look with. You all remember Lord Kaimes' illustration, of the fine lady and the clergyman who were looking at the moon together through a telescope. "I see two shadows," said the lady, "and they incline towards each other. Doubtless they are two happy lovers!" "Your pardon, madam," cried the priest, "they are obviously the two towers of a Cathedral!" A *progresista* who might be deemed quite rabid and dangerous in Spain, would be a pale and twinkling light, in comparison with the most subdued exhibition of those democratical pyrotechnics, which are considered, at their brightest, as quite harmless among us. The most unenterprising *moderado*, on the other hand, might be taken for quite a revolutionist, in contrast with the orthodox royalists who adhered to Don Carlos and were addicted to swear upon the holiness of the anointed—men who would have gloried in re-establishing, for church and state, the maxims and practices of Philip the Second and Antonio Perez, without a spark of the intellect or energy which gave respectability and dignity to that grand though gloomy despotism!

The two fractions of the liberal party, therefore were not quite as far apart, in reality, as they seemed to be—and although—by dwelling on their peculiar points of difference, each to defend and fortify his own—each grew more absolute and more exclusive—the *moderado* more moderate and the *progresista* more progressive—they were still near enough together, in 1837, to find some terms of compromise. Perhaps the presence of a common enemy suggested to them the necessity of union. The cause of Don Carlos—though unacceptable to the more enlightened portion of the population—the inhabitants of

the cities and large towns especially—was still deep in the affections of the rural districts. New ideas do not enter rapidly, where the men who are to carry and receive them have access to each other, only by mule-paths, over rugged mountains. Mac-Adamized roads are a great help to free principles. It was, consequently, a universal rule, that the fastnesses of the hills and their almost inaccessible valleys, were strongholds of Carlism. The liberal party were compelled to regard this as a fixed fact, and to act accordingly. Although, therefore, the Cortes of 1837 were under the exclusive control of the *progresistas*, they had the prudence, as well as the magnanimity, to make such concessions to their opponents, as removed the most substantial objections to the Constitution of 1812, and united in its support, for a time at least, almost all the advocates of a constitutional system. There seemed to be in prospect for a while, one of those political millenniums, which are so often prophesied, but never happen, even in countries where political augury ought to be a more demonstrative science than in Spain.

In August, 1839, the death-blow was given to the hopes of Don Carlos, and in 1840, the feeble remnant of his army was put to rout. Espartero, the victorious leader of the government forces, was a *progresista* in his politics, and naturally enough availed himself of his prestige with the nation, to elevate and fortify the position of his party, which at that time was very much depressed. A *moderado* majority, in the Cortes, had just adopted a law adverse to the municipal organization which the liberal party had always so vigorously upheld. The *progresistas* continued to regard the free municipal system as one of the chief bulwarks of provincial and popular rights, against that absorbing centralization, towards which the *moderado*, like the old despotic, doctrines tended. Espartero endeavored to procure from Cristina a veto on the obnoxious statute, and a dissolution of the legislature which had enacted it. Cristina refused to yield. A popular outbreak was the result, which was followed by her Majesty's resignation of the Regency, in 1840, and her immediate departure for France. Espartero was elected Regent, in her stead, and the *progresistas*, for a little while, had everything in their own hands.

In Calderon's beautiful drama of the *Cisma de Inglaterra*—the English Schism—or as we call it, the Reformation in Eng-

land—the melancholy Catharine of Arragon, in the depth of her desolation and disgrace, calls on her maidens for a song, in which they ask the very flowers to learn, from her, how all things fleet and fade! The chances and changes of Spanish politics might give as serious instruction to the leaves and grass, as the vicissitudes of Henry's victim! In the summer of 1843, Espartero, Duke of Victory, Regent and Saviour of the realm, was a fugitive on board an English steamer in the Bay of Cadiz—stripped of his titles, and stigmatized in a ministerial decree as “bearing the mark of public execration!” With Espartero, fell the friends who had clung to him and the supremacy of the doctrines they had espoused. In the face of the Constitution, which expressly provided that the age of fourteen should be the term of the royal minority—Isabella—a child not quite thirteen—was declared of full age, and invested with the symbols of dominion. Then commenced the predominant influence of Narvaez, Duke of Valencia—a man of mark and greatness—who, from that time to the present, has, directly or indirectly, in person or by influence, ruled the destinies of the Peninsula. It was under the influence of Narvaez and the *moderado* party, that the Constitution of 1845 was adopted—which, down to the latest dates by the steamers, continued to be preached from, at Madrid, as the fundamental text. Nor is it likely to be soon changed. The science of interpretation has gradually superseded the older and clumsier methods of dispensing with obnoxious provisions, and all parties seem to have adopted, in Spain, a rule—elsewhere, quite illustrious—that of administering Constitutions “as they understand them.” In such case, you know, one form answers about as well as another.

It is not my intention to add to these details—which I have already crowded too thickly upon you—by an analysis of the present fundamental law of Spain. It is, no doubt, defective in many particulars—perhaps positively bad, in others. It no doubt gives to the central administration an absorbing influence, hardly compatible with that development of provincial interests and preservation of provincial rights which must, ultimately, be demanded by the national prosperity. It no doubt retains many of the executive features, which owe their origin to the times when Constitutions were not in vogue. It is unquestionably

loose in many of those provisions which vitally regard the liberty of the subject. It admits constructions, which ought never to be allowed, in respect to matters which should not be left in doubt. Yet—on the whole—in its framework and design, and in the mass of its elements—it is a free Constitution—practically more free, I believe, when the habits and temper of the people are considered along with it—than the system of any other nation on the continent has ever been. It is restrictive, in its religious requirements—adopting the Catholic, as the religion of the State, and giving no formal toleration to any other—but this is not felt to be a grievance, by a people who are all Catholics, and who find, in the identification of their faith with the political guaranties of the State, one of the strongest claims which the Constitution has on their allegiance. It is thoroughly monarchical—but this is indispensable, to a people whose traditions—and prejudices even—are monarchical altogether—a people who, in practice and from conviction, regard loyalty as one of the loftiest virtues and most sacred and necessary duties. There are really, in Spain, no republicans or democrats—or at all events, no persons seriously contemplating the establishment, at any time to come, of a republic or a democracy. The sense of personal independence is as high and scrupulous there, as it can be anywhere—not excepting our own country. And there is a republican element too, in the character of the Spaniards, which, I believe exists no where else, at the degree in which they possess it. Your American citizen will concede to you, no doubt—if you ask him to do so—that other people are as good as he. But this is not the principle which he sets chiefly forth, in his life and conversation. It is the reverse of the medal—it is the conviction—the practical demonstration—that he is as good as other people. He will not deny—he dares not deny—the equality of others with himself—but he goes about always asserting his equality with others. The Spaniard, on the contrary, has a sense of equality, which blesses him who gives as well as him who takes. If he requires the concession from others, he demands it, chiefly and emphatically, through the concessions which he makes to them. There is so much self-respect involved in his respect to others and in his manifestation of it, that reciprocity is unavoidable. To this, and this mainly, is attributable the high courteous bearing, which is conspicuous in all the people, and which renders

the personal intercourse of the respective classes and conditions, less marked by strong and invidious distinctions, than in any other nation with whose manners and customs I am familiar.

But with this eminently republican temper the loyalty of the Spaniards to their monarch is perfectly compatible. There is no servility in it. It is homage paid to the individual, as identified with an institution. The prince is the embodiment of their nationality—the representative of past glory and present unity. They rally round the throne, in spite of the frailties or crimes of him who fills it. They are no worshippers of Ferdinand or Isabella—no martyrs for Carlos—but liege-men to the person whom they believe to be the rightful monarch of the Spains. It is a matter of great uncertainty, therefore, whether the most perfect system of free institutions which the Spaniards will ever adopt, will lack—though it may modify—the monarchical feature. At present, certainly, it is folly to suppose the abolition of monarchy possible, and still greater folly to suppose, because of such impossibility, that Spain has no title to be registered among the nations whose institutions are liberal.

It is sometimes said, and with a good deal of truth, that the machinery of the Spanish elective system is often so managed as to make the legislative majorities echo, for the most part, the will of the Executive. This is an evil—a gross one—but still an evil not easily avoided, at first, where the executive administration has been maturing for centuries, and the elective machinery is new and of course comparatively clumsy. Yet the evil is neither a fatal nor a hopeless one. The very intrigues of the executive, to manage the legislature, are a concession to the representative idea. Even when successful, they are an acknowledgment of legislative supremacy—because they show that power, to maintain itself, feels the necessity of speaking by the mouth of the law. And even at the worst of times, in any representative government, where there is liberty of speech and a press with any liberty, a minority is always a refuge for freedom and for right. I have heard, in the Cortes of Spain—in the face of an overwhelming ministerial majority—the measures of the administration canvassed, with an openness and an ability and courage which any legislative body of the day would find it difficult to surpass. It is by no means rare to see the policy of an administration changed, in spite of ministerial majorities and the

prestige of the crown—by the mere vigor of appeals which vibrate, from the tribune of the Deputies, to the hearts of the masses of the people. It is impossible that there can be any great and permanent wrong in government, where there is thus free discussion. Error and misrule are plants which cannot grow in the light. And when—coupled with and qualifying the prerogatives and personal immunity of the monarch, are the principle and exaction of ministerial responsibility—responsibility of life, liberty and fortune, for the prostitution or abuse of power—I cannot think that error and misrule are to be dreaded, much or long.

Nor am I prepared to say—that even if it were practicable, or had been so—a more democratical Constitution would be, or would for ten years past, have been—desirable for Spain. On the contrary, it is my unequivocal judgment that it would have been no blessing. You may establish and alter constitutions—publish programmes—put forth proclamations—sing *te Deums* and fire salvos of artillery—but it is all vanity and emptiness of sound, unless there be an adaptation of the system, which you introduce or welcome, to the character and condition of the people on whom it is bestowed. Institutions must be made for men as they are. They may be a little in advance, so as to lead men on—but they must not be so far before as to lead men astray. You may change men by degrees—but since the days of Titania and Oberon they have ceased to be capable of instant metamorphosis—unless indeed you turn their heads like Nick Bottom's—and then, the only marvel is the length of their ears. Nature is prodigal of lessons to us in this particular. Her permanent processes are all gradual. Far down beneath the magnificent surface which the earth now spreads before us, are traces of the slime and ooze, from which, in the long march of countless ages, arose, one by one, with mighty steps and slow, the new forms which have been developed unto us and the things about us! Everything that is to endure, must have time to grow. The marble and the granite which build our palaces and castles are not the products of a day. The oak whose rugged fibre braces their walls together, is a century, it may be, in climbing from its acorn to the leaf which catches, earliest, the rain of heaven. It is only the fungus, which is matured in a single night. Of the fairer and more fragrant, quick-blossoming flowers of the field, George Herbert has truly and sadly said,

“Their root is ever in their grave,
And they must die!”

Ferdinand and Isabella did not make Moorish Spain Christian, simply by tearing the crescent from the towers of the Alhambra. It cost long years of merciful labor, in teaching—of sinful labor, in persecution—to eradicate the old faith and plant the new. And a change of government—a deep, substantial, real change which shall go from the surface to the centre of society—which shall touch the feelings and reach the convictions of men—which shall revolutionize their modes of thought, and consolidate into practical, operative wisdom, their theories and hopes and longings—such a change is almost as difficult as a revolution in their faith. It is more difficult perhaps—inasmuch as that which deals with the unknown is more open to the access of the imagination, and of course more liable to be swiftly turned by its quick-handed power!

Now, what a picture does the history of Spain present to us, from the earliest ages of which history speaks? War and nothing but war! War foreign—war domestic! The invasion of strangers and civil broil! The Phœnician—the Carthaginian—the Roman—the Goth—the Saracen and the Gaul—each treading all things, in his turn, under his shodden heel! Then—the home-struggles between dynasties and aspirants to power—the array of conflicting opinions, and personal, and local, and provincial interests and hatreds—what field have they not blighted, which had escaped the invader’s firebrand? Glory—the nation has had—power—splendor—empire—gold—but peace never—peace, the messenger of love—peace, from beneath the spreading of whose wings, alone, the glad tidings of happiness can go up from earth!

I remember (if you will pardon the digression) standing, once, within the gallery which runs around the highest accessible internal point of the great dome of St. Peter’s, at Rome. It was a day—not of pontifical celebration, but still of high solemnity—and they were singing a grand mass in the chapel of the choir, as I went up. From the immense elevation at which I stood, the high altar and its gorgeous canopy—moulded into majesty from the bronzes of the heathen Pantheon—seemed but a trifling and a shapeless heap. The golden lamps which burn all night and day before the shrine, sent not a single ray

to me. The few stragglers, who loitered through the nave and transepts, seemed but as creeping insects. The noise and turmoil of the world without were shut away from me. The only distinct impression made upon my giddy senses, was—now, by the rising swell of a low, distant, holy harmony—and then, by the fragrant perfume of the incense—as together they went upon their way towards the sky! It was a solemn moment to me. It repaid, ten thousand fold, the pains and privations of a sick man's pilgrimage, and amid a press of feelings such as make a life-time of an instant, it engraved, forever, on my heart, the deep conviction, that the struggles and the strife—the storms and battles—that harass men and nations, are things “of the earth, earthly,” and rise no higher—and that the accents of harmony and the breath of peace are the only bearers upward of worship that will not fall short!

Come then, in whatever form it may—that government which gives peace to a distracted land—which brings brother to brother, from the field of carnage to the home of plenty—which gives time and rest and opportunity, for the pursuit of lofty objects and the development of human happiness—call it by what name, or couple it with what institutions you may—that government is a blessing, and its establishment is one step forward in the march of civilization!

It is in the light of the principles thus announced, that I commend, with all its faults, the system of policy established by the *moderado* party in Spain, and particularly directed and carried out by the leader of that party, General Narvaez. It has had its abuses and has them now, no doubt. It may, in some degree, have owed its origin to the desire of power—perhaps as much so, as to any enlarged views of statesmanship or comprehensive ideas of political philosophy. But I am inclined to think it has not been without its due share of these last. I believe Narvaez, though an ambitious and somewhat unscrupulous man, to have been eminently patriotic and national, and I am sure that posterity will do him the justice to concede that he has been guided, in his many high-handed measures during the last few years, by an unshaken, even if it be a too monopolizing devotion to the constitutional throne, in whose maintenance he believes that the welfare of his country is involved. One thing is beyond all cavil, and that is, that his indomitable and sleep-

less will has been the staff on which the peace of the nation has rested. To him mainly, is attributable the fact—which cannot be gainsaid—that Spain has remained more calm, and has gone on more quietly and surely in her march of peaceful development, than any other nation of continental Europe, since the convulsions of the last French Revolution. In the only serious outbreak which has occurred in Spain since that eventful epoch—the temporary insurrection in Madrid in March, 1848,—a supposed participation in which resulted in the abrupt and peremptory dismissal of Sir Henry Bulwer—Narvaez, Prime Minister of Spain, fought side by side with the soldiers in the *Plaza*. In his personal discharge of duty then, as always, he displayed the fearless energy, which, with a broad and deep sagacity, had established throughout the kingdom, a firm basis for the maintenance of peace. I do not deny that the result was a temporary dictatorship. I do not deny that men of the opposing party, distinguished for ability and patriotism, were driven into exile, with despotic haste, on mere suspicion of revolutionary designs. It is not to be concealed that the barriers, which had been raised to protect the people from the encroachments of power, were temporarily overleaped; that in the reaction which followed the attempted revolution—and which, even yet, has not subsided altogether—the ostensible progress of entirely free institutions was embarrassed and checked. To those who look only at the surface—who judge of things according to their names—who prefer

“—— the braggart shout
For some blind glimpse of freedom,”

to the real and substantial, but unostentatious, advancement of liberal institutions, in the shape which circumstances may give them—to such, it may certainly appear that these results have weakened the claim of Spain to be held among free nations. But it is not difficult, on the other hand, to show that the prosperity, the happiness, the permanent good of the people were rescued and secured by the reactionary course of the government. Like individuals, nations which have suffered much, are not apt to trifle and ought not to be trifled with. Relief such as they require, is that which they should seek—a reality, not an abstraction. Better far that an hundred constitu-

tional provisions should have been trodden under foot for a while, than that the nation, for whose preservation they were made, should have been plunged into discord and wo, for the formality of their observance. Better a brief dictatorship, with peace, than the nominal triumph of exaggerated liberalism, with the renewal of anarchy, and the certainty of desolation! Better one evil than a thousand! Better the annihilation of an hundred forms, than the infliction of one, deep and real curse!

What has been the practical result? The *progresista* orators have been eloquently denunciatory. The *progresista* press has been loud and angry, and, it may be, has had the logic on its side. The English journals—remembering that the triumph of Narvaez was the knell of British influence—have teemed with diatribes against the existing order of things, and lamentations over the relapse of the Spanish people into the abuses of the older despotism. On this side of the water, we have echoed back the British voice, until we have persuaded ourselves that Spain and Austria stand, side by side, the representatives and champions of all that deserves the hatred and contempt of free-men! Yet—in spite of all this—the Spanish people have gone on—slowly it may be according to our ideas and our customs—but steadily and surely—advancing their material and social interests, and developing their territorial and industrial wealth. Hitherto, or till within a few years back, their agricultural prosperity was rendered impossible, by their defective means of internal communication. It was in vain that a propitious soil and climate brought to ripeness and plenty the most bountiful harvests—if the grain rotted, in the fields or in the granaries, for lack of roads over which it might be borne to other provinces where it was needed, or to the shores of the sea, whence it might pass to feed the stranger and bring back the stranger's wealth. Commerce was bent down to the earth by the pressure of prohibitory enactments, which rendered the profession of the honorable merchant but a means of decent starvation, and handed the whole treasury of traffic to the smuggler and his infamous abettors, foreign and domestic. Manufactures, for many years, had ceased to be a source of wealth, except where favored in an unusual degree by natural or casual advantages, or by the maintenance of the most arbitrary and unjust monopolies. Capital, indeed, could not possibly be led into channels—no matter how

tempting—which might, at any moment, be diverted or be drained, by the outbreaking of revolutions, or the fluctuations of civil war and uncertain institutions.

During the few years which have elapsed since the conclusion of the Carlist rebellion—and more than ever, during the last three or four—the evils thus enumerated have been gradually disappearing. A system of turnpike-roads, upon the amplest scale, has been projected and is advancing, every day, more widely and substantially. Already many roads have been finished, which have given outlets to stagnant production, and set in motion sources of national and individual wealth which have been torpid for centuries. The canal-ization (as they call it,) of the Ebro—which will develop, to a miraculous degree, the resources and the energies of the central grain-growing regions—is not only in contemplation, but in vigorous, active hands for prosecution. Several rail-roads have been completed—short and comparatively unimportant it is true—but yet so useful, within their limits, as to satisfy the nation of the paramount advantage of that means of transportation. That which is, daily, in operation, between Madrid and Aranjuez, is not only the beginning of a great central line, which is to unite the plains of Castile with the fertile shores and numerous ports of the Mediterranean—but is destined, of itself, to be a mighty agent in the fulfilment of the grand idea which projected it—by bringing those who work the springs of government, at the Capital, in direct and unavoidable contact with the wisdom, and value, and practicability of such enterprises. Economical societies—national and provincial, dedicated to the improvement of agriculture and the promotion of industry of all sorts—have sprung up all over the land. Lyceums, with lectures—enlisting the best talent, yet gratuitously delivered—are beginning to do good service in the cities. From year to year, new modifications of the tariff, a more honest administration of the customs, and a more vigilant guardianship of the coasts, have increased—as they are still increasing—the national revenue—and infused new life into external and internal commerce. Here and there, manufacturing establishments, of great extent and employing large capital, are in successful operation—breaking down by the force of honest and energetic competition, the monopolies which

have so long defied the will of the people, and corrupted the very heart of the government.

As the re-establishment of peace has restored confidence—so its probable permanence has given that confidence root. Capital which before had sought investment, as I have said, in the safer and more profitable industry and speculation of other countries, has begun to look at home for employment. When I was last in Madrid, a committee on rail-roads, headed by the distinguished *progresista* leader, Mr. Olozaga—an able and enlightened public man—was sitting during the recess of the Cortes—bringing before it the most accomplished engineers, foreign and domestic—the wealthiest capitalists and most enterprising and public-spirited citizens—consulting with them all—seeking information, practical and scientific, from all sources—with a view to building up, on the wisest, most judicious, and most permanent basis, a great national scheme of internal improvement. The creation of corporations—formerly almost unheard of, except as ecclesiastical or government institutions—has of late entered into the national policy—care being taken to profit by the experience of other nations and to restrict them in that tendency to abuse which has occasionally shorn them, elsewhere, of one-half their capacity for good. The internal police, once so entirely neglected as to place life and property almost at the mercy of the reckless and lawless, has been remodelled, reformed, and so judiciously distributed and governed, as to have already materially diminished the statistics of crime, and to have diffused that salutary conviction of the certainty of punishment, which is the first step toward the recognized supremacy of the law.

As yet, the visible effects of the new system are most conspicuous in the cities. Madrid has grown, so greatly, since the death of Ferdinand VII, in all the appliances of comfort and indeed magnificence, social and external, that although still behind some of the other capitals of Europe, it would hardly be recognized by a traveller of twenty years back. In the commercial cities, the march of prosperity is equally conspicuous. All of them give token of it—to some extent. In some of them new buildings—large improvements—are every day going on. The monastic orders having been suppressed and their property

sequestered and sold, the monasteries have been converted into repositories of art, or public edifices—or have been demolished to make way for new buildings, or for public places of ornament and healthful recreation.

In short—all over the country—in the sunshine and security of peace, every element of vitality seems to have germinated. After the frosts and inculture of so many dreary years—the soil may have yielded, slowly and with difficulty, to the first upward pressure of the weak shoots—but their roots have grown stronger, and they are now above the surface, catching vigor from the air, and expanding in the light. The day is not very distant, when all the birds of good omen shall gather and sing in their branches!

When more perfect means of communication shall have brought the people together, and have given facility and frequency to their intercourse and rapidity to their interchange of thought and the generalization of public opinion, then the time will have come for the consolidation of a permanently and thoroughly free system. Then the nation will be wise enough to establish it—enlightened enough to bear it—strong enough to maintain it. Then Spain will bless, and the whole civilized world will applaud, the probation through which she is now passing—the wise delay, which hastens the coming of the good it but seems to retard. Then it will be seen, that the slow travail was needful for the happy birth. History will have another example, from which to teach, that through the tangled web of human vicissitude, national as well as individual, runs—precious, though invisible till the unravelling—the golden thread of the wisdom and providence of Heaven.

Of the probable direction which the political institutions of Spain will take, when the sense of the nation, enlightened and mature, shall have been concentrated upon them, it is of course not easy to speak with even proximate accuracy, yet. The general tendency of things, is I think, however, towards a federative monarchy. The relations between Spain and Portugal and the feasibility of uniting the whole Peninsula as one nation were the subject of frequent discussion, both public and private, when I was in Madrid last year, and have, I know, furnished topics of interesting consideration to the peninsular diplomacy.

It seems difficult indeed to understand how a tendency, which is so much the result of natural circumstances, can be long resisted. But—leaving Portugal out of the question—the Spanish kingdom has more of the federal elements than any nation that I know of in Europe. The provinces—mostly segregated from each other by natural barriers—are quite as much so by their peculiar and respective characters, customs and laws. The sturdy Biscayan, the Switzer of the Peninsula, is as different, in his personal and provincial characteristics, from the stolid and uncouth Gallician—the industrious, but choleric and selfish Catalan, or the witty, flippant, gallant, bull-destroying Andalusian—as is the burgher of Amsterdam from the luxurious, sun-loving Neapolitan. And so of the other provinces. Their provincial codes—their forms—prescriptions—ideas—are all different. Their interests are different—frequently conflicting. Their costumes and dialects are totally distinct. The soil they till—the products they consume—are as the soil and products of remote nations. Some of them are mountaineers—some dwellers upon boundless plains—some fishermen, or sailors, or manufacturers, or cultivators of the deep green *vegas* that beautify the borders of the sea. Yet, over all, and binding them and all their diversities together, is the iron band of a beloved and time-honored nationality. Catalonians, Biscayans, Asturians, Castilians—they are all Spaniards! Here then are the ingredients of confederate strength—municipal diversity and national identity—what the political metaphysicians disguise, by calling it “unity in plurality and plurality in unity”—but what every body understands, quite as well, from phraseology not half so awful.

The very existence of these elements—so suggestive of confederation, because so likely to produce prosperity under and through it—renders it next to impossible to uphold the present centralized and centralizing system, for any length of time, after the causes of improvement, which are now at work, shall have made it as easy to carry out as it now is to discover, what the national prosperity demands. The very distinction in provincial characteristics—which would be the main stay of a federal union, constituted to adopt and perpetuate it, as far as useful—is productive only of discord and discontents, where

provincial wants and interests are merged in an absorbing consolidation. Centralization, which, modified by federal institutions, would be a blessing to every part and communicate to each the vigor of the whole, must, in its nature, crush what it attempts unnaturally to amalgamate. Two things—each in its way a good—are blended thus into one evil. Two healthful ingredients are combined, by bad chemistry, into a poison. This cannot last, when men grow able to appreciate it and to change it. There can be but one true policy, for a people in such a condition, and that is, to give to the provincial and to the national element, each, its separate and appropriate sphere to work in—to surround the throne, which shall represent the nation, with the guaranties which shall be drawn from prosperous states united to form and to defend it. That such will be the ultimate shape of the Spanish commonwealth I have no doubt—but men have had no doubt, before this, of things which, notwithstanding, have never happened—and the ways of nations—like the ways of the power that rules them—are truly “in the depths of the sea.” Yet I am assured, by every argument which can force conviction—that the day of peril to Spain, from the oppression of her government, is over. It may be long before she becomes altogether what she ought to be—she will never fall back into what she has been. From this day forward, her march must necessarily be onward. She has tasted the lotus of freedom—the tree grows by her side, and she can never let the fruit fall from her lips!

I am admonished, by the progress of time, that I must close, what has been, necessarily, a superficial view of a wide field. I have done all that I had hoped, if I have been able to show to those who have done me the honor to hear me—that instead of reasons for discord and hatred, there is every reason for close and kind sympathy, between our country and the land which sent Columbus forth to seek the soil on which we dwell, far off amid the trackless Indian seas. If other nations, which are endeavoring to break their chains with one convulsive, angry blow, deserve our warm enthusiasm and receive it—shall the same feeling be denied to one, which, for half a century—through blood and fire at first—and then through sad oppression, and through the calmer and severer trials of peaceful revolution,

has been indomitably working out her gradual but sure redemption? Her institutions may differ from ours. Her system may be imperfect; her power may, as yet, be far below its ancient scale and that of our present predominance; but the fortitude and perseverance which have gone thus far will go farther,

*“ever reaping something new—
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do.”*

If we are devoted to human freedom, for its own sake—whatever be the shape it takes—it becomes us to welcome a constitutional monarchy which has been reared upon the ruins of a despotism. That monarchy may be devoted, in appearance, rather to the cause of order than the cause of progress—but in Europe order is the road to progress, and there have been, of late, too many unhappy illustrations of the truth—that the worst of despotisms is that which follows an abortive and too hasty effort to be free. All cannot be like ourselves. All need not be. To sympathize with none but those who adopt our forms, is to reverence but the reproduction of ourselves—to forget that which is in us and in our forms, and makes them and us what we are. The spirit of freedom is no giant of mist and vapor—like the Fisherman’s Genie in the Arabian story—to be compressed into a single vase, and kept captive there by one only seal and spell. The magic of king Solomon has not descended exclusively on us, that we alone may work such wonders. The spirit of liberty may be the indwelling soul of institutions, which to us and our accustomed thoughts and prejudices may bear no trace of it. It may linger amid forms which to us may seem the meaningless slough of antiquity and barbarism. It may be where we least look for it—a diamond, in a cavern where we see but darkness—gold, beneath a torrent whose black waters make us tremble. But wherever it is—it makes holy. Its forms are sacred, be they uncouth as they may. All together they may make up, what singly they are not—as the Faun in the forest—the Naiad in the stream—the deities of Hades and Olympus—were but the shapes under which the religion of Eld perpetuated its divided worship of the one pervading and indivisible God!

If we are the depositaries of the true faith of Freedom, let us remember that anathema is not its preaching—that love is its bond and charity its crown! Let us beware how we give it to history, to say, that the resources which Spain needed to maintain her, in her toil after happiness, development and freedom, were wasted to protect her from the iniquity of republican aggression!



Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: SEP 2002

Preservation Technologies

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111



DOBBS BROS.
LIBRARY BINDING

FEB 76

ST. AUGUSTINE

FLA.

32084

